

**Information**

*General Session*

**Public Study Session on the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA) and the Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA), as Required by SB 1209 (Chapter 517, Statutes of 2006)**

**Executive Summary:** This agenda item fulfills the requirement specified in SB 1209 (Chapter 517, Statutes of 2006) that the Commission hold a public study session to consider the implications of incorporating the knowledge, skills, and abilities assessed by the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA) within the Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA).

**Recommended Action:** This is an information item only.

**Presenter:** Yvonne Novelli, Assistant Consultant, Professional Services Division, and Phyllis Jacobson, Ed.D., Administrator, Professional Services Division

**Strategic Plan Goal: 1**

**Promote educational excellence through the preparation and certification of professional educators.**

- ◆ Sustain high quality standards for the preparation of professional educators.
- ◆ Sustain high quality standards for the performance of credential candidates.

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## **Public Study Session on the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA) and the Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA), as Required by SB 1209 (Chapter 517, Statutes of 2006)**

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### **Introduction**

Senate Bill 1209 (Chapter 517, Statutes of 2006) requires that the Commission “shall conduct a public study session to consider the implications of incorporating the assessment of ability, skills and knowledge related to effective reading instruction that is assessed by the Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA) within the teacher performance assessment set forth in Section 44230.1 and shall report on the outcome of that session to the Legislature and the Governor no later than July 1, 2007.”

A primary rationale for holding a study session of this nature is to consider the potential for reducing the number of the examinations required for teacher credentialing, if there is overlap or redundancy in what is measured across these examinations. In this regard, SB 1209 requires that three issues in particular be looked at in relation to the implication of incorporating the knowledge, skills and abilities assessed in the RICA examination within the teaching performance assessment: the implications, costs, and validity of consolidating these two assessments.

This agenda item addresses the Commission’s requirement to hold a public study session to consider these topics. The information provided in this agenda item is intended to serve as a background and as a context for the public comments and the discussions facilitated through this public study session.

### **Background**

**The RICA Examination.** Education Code sections 44283 and 44283.2 require California-trained candidates for either the Multiple Subject Teaching Credential or Education Specialist Instruction Credential to pass the RICA as a method of ensuring that these individuals possess the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed by entry-level teachers for effective reading instruction. The RICA reflects the 1998 RICA Test Specifications, which were created to be consistent with the California 1997 *English-Language Arts Standards* and 1999 draft *Reading/Language Arts Framework for California Public Schools*, along with the then current research in reading development and instruction. The Commission is in the process of reviewing the specifications to determine what may need revising based on the 2006 *Reading/Language Arts Framework*

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and current research. This process could result in changes to both the content and organization of the RICA.

**The Teaching Performance Assessment.** Senate Bill 2042 (Chapter 548, Statutes of 1998) required all California-trained candidates for a preliminary Multiple and Single Subject Teaching Credential to pass an assessment of teaching performance in order to earn a teaching credential. This assessment of teaching performance is designed to measure the candidate's knowledge, skills, and ability with relation to California's adopted *Standards for the Teaching Profession (CSTP)* as exemplified in the thirteen *Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs)*. Due to the state's fiscal condition at the time and based on requests by the Legislature and others, the Commission delayed the implementation of the teaching performance assessment requirement under SB 2042. In 2006, however, SB 1209 (Chapter 517, Statutes of 2006) mandated the implementation of the teaching performance assessment requirement for all multiple and single subject professional teacher preparation programs as of July 1, 2008.

**Description of the RICA Examination.** Education Code section 44283 requires that the RICA be available as two unique assessments, the RICA Video Performance Assessment (VPA) and the RICA Written Examination, allowing candidates to satisfy the requirement using their choice of either assessment. Both of these testing options assess the RICA Test Specifications, which reflect the knowledge and skills important for the provision of effective reading instruction to California students. The Test Specifications currently consist of 43 teacher competencies in the area of reading. These competencies are organized into 13 content areas, which fall under the following four broad domains:

- Domain I: Planning and Organizing Reading Instruction Based on Ongoing Assessment
- Domain II: Developing Phonological and Other Linguistic Processes Related to Reading
- Domain III: Developing Reading Comprehension and Promoting Independent Reading
- Domain IV: Supporting Reading through Oral and Written Language Development

### *The RICA Written Examination*

The RICA Written Examination consists of a constructed-response section plus a multiple-choice section. Examinees take both sections as one paper-and-pencil examination during a four-hour session and receive a single, combined score. Together, the two sections permit a broad and in-depth assessment of credential candidates' knowledge about effective reading instruction and the ability to apply that knowledge. The constructed-response section includes four focused educational problems and instructional tasks, each reflecting one of the Domains and requiring candidates to (a) consider information about a class, a group of students, an individual student, or an instructional situation and (b) devise or provide explanations related to appropriate instructional strategies or assessment approaches. The constructed response section also contains a case study item, which asks the candidates to assess a student's reading performance, describe appropriate instructional strategies, and explain why these strategies would be effective. The multiple-choice section includes both content items,

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which directly assess knowledge about reading and reading instruction, and contextualized items, which assess the candidate's ability to apply specific knowledge, to analyze specific problems, or to conduct specific tasks related to reading instruction. The Written Examination is financed through the \$140 examinee fee, with the Commission receiving approximately \$875,000 in 2005-06 toward the Test Development Administration Account (TDAA 0408).

### *The RICA Video Performance Assessment*

The design of the current RICA VPA allows candidates to submit representations of their best classroom work. A candidate creates three video packets, with one packet demonstrating the candidate's competencies in Domains I and II, the second in Domains I and III, and the third in Domains I and IV. Additionally, one packet reflects whole-class instruction, another small-group instruction, and the third individual instruction. Each packet includes a ten-minute videotape of the candidate providing reading instruction in an actual teaching setting and the candidate's responses to information requested related to that instruction. The requested information includes a description of the student(s) taught, the lesson plan, the rationale used for choosing the specific lesson plan, a self-appraisal of the instruction, and suggestions for further or alternative instructional strategies. As with the Written Examination, the Commission costs are covered within the \$232 examinee fee, and, during 2005-2006, the Commission received a bit less than \$5,000 for the TDAA 0408.

### *Scoring for Both Assessment Methods*

The RICA Written Examination is administered six times each year, every other month, while RICA VPA candidates may have their packets scored at any of three annual submission periods. The Written Examination constructed-response items and the VPA packets are scored centrally, facilitated by the RICA contractor. The scorers are trained and calibrated individuals who either have a California elementary credential and recent experience teaching reading or have recent experience instructing reading methods courses for California certification. All scorers must be familiar with the State standards and be recommended by their employers. Training and calibrating the scorers are done in a consistent and thorough manner through out the scoring session, with those who perform well asked to return to future scoring sessions. The Written Examination multiple-choice items are machine-scored, employing quality control standards to insure accuracy. A variety of statistical information derived from these reading instruction assessments is readily available for any needed study, such as the annual Title II report.

**Description of the TPA.** The TPA requires candidates to demonstrate through their performance with K-12 students that they have mastered the knowledge, skills, and abilities required of a beginning teacher, as these are exemplified in the *Teaching Performance Expectations (TPEs)*. The examination has several tasks that candidates must complete. Each task covers multiple TPEs so that all TPEs are measured by more than one task. The candidate's performance is measured, or scored, against a standardized rubric developed specifically for each task. Assessors are typically faculty, K-12 teachers, mentors, and others who must receive specialized training and who are calibrated on a regular basis to assure the continuing reliability of their scoring.

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The TPA is embedded throughout the candidate's experiences in the teacher preparation program, and each teacher preparation program develops and implements its own plan for embedding the TPA within the program. There are several TPA models from which teacher preparation programs may choose, including the Commission's California Teaching Performance Assessment (CA TPA) model plus the PACT (Performance Assessment for California Teachers) model and potentially others as well. All TPA models must be approved by the Commission. An overview of the tasks of the CA TPA model is provided below for reference.

In accordance with SB 1209, no centralized scoring takes place for any of the teaching performance assessment models. All scoring is done locally and data are kept by the individual teacher preparation programs. Candidates do not pay a fee for this assessment to the Commission.

## ***The CA TPA Model: Description of the Tasks***

- The ***Subject Specific Pedagogy*** task asks the candidates to use information provided within the prompt about specific students to identify appropriate subject-specific instruction and assessment plans, and to adapt this information for these students.

The following TPEs are measured in the *Subject Specific Pedagogy* task:

- Specific pedagogical skills for subject matter instruction (TPE 1)
  - Interpretation and use of assessments (TPE 3)
  - Making content accessible (TPE 4)
  - Developmentally appropriate teaching practices (TPE 6)
  - Teaching English learners (TPE 7)
  - Instructional planning (TPE 9)
- The ***Designing Instruction*** task requires the candidate to make appropriate connections between what the teacher knows about the students in the class to his/her instructional planning for those students. This written task contains a five-step set of prompts that focuses the candidate on first identifying and then applying the connections between the students' characteristics and learning needs and the teacher's instructional planning and adaptations for those specific students.

The following TPEs are measured in the *Designing Instruction* task:

- Making subject matter comprehensible to students (TPE 1)
  - Engaging and supporting students in learning (TPE 4, 6, 7)
  - Planning instruction and designing learning experiences for students (TPE 8, 9)
  - Developing as a professional educator (TPE 13)
- The ***Assessing Learning*** task requires candidates to demonstrate their ability to design standards-based, appropriate student assessment activities in the context of a small group of students using a specific standards-based lesson of the

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candidate's choice. In addition, candidates demonstrate their ability to conduct assessment activities appropriately to assess student learning and to diagnose student instructional needs based on the results of the assessment(s).

The following TPEs are measured in the *Assessing Learning* task:

- Assessing student learning (TPE 3)
  - Engaging and supporting students in learning (TPE 6, 7)
  - Planning instruction and designing learning experiences for students (TPE 8, 9)
  - Developing as a professional educator (TPE 13)
- ***The Culminating Teaching Experience*** task is the culminating activity of the set of three TPA tasks. In this task, the candidate designs a standards-based lesson for a class of students and teaches that lesson to actual K-12 students within the classroom setting, while making appropriate use of class time and instructional resources, meeting the differing needs of individual students within the class, managing instruction and interactions with and between students, and assessing student learning. Following the lesson, the candidate demonstrates the ability to analyze the strengths and weaknesses of the lesson. To ensure equity to all candidates in the scoring of the *Culminating Teaching* task, a videotape of the lesson is collected and reviewed as evidence during the scoring process.

All TPEs except for TPE 12 (Professional, Legal and Ethical Obligations) are measured in the *Culminating Teaching* task:

- Making subject matter comprehensible to students (TPE 1)
- Assessing student learning (TPE 2, 3)
- Engaging and supporting students in learning (TPE 4, 5, 6, 7)
- Planning instruction and designing learning experiences for students (TPE 8, 9)
- Creating and maintaining effective environments for student learning (TPE 10, 11)
- Developing as a professional educator (TPE 13)

**Summary Comparison between the RICA and the TPA.** The following chart summarizes the major comparison points between the RICA and the TPA examinations.

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## Comparison Between the RICA and the TPA Examinations\*

	Reading Instruction Competence Assessment (RICA)	Teaching Performance Assessment (TPA)
<b>Mandatory for Which California-Trained Candidates</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>initial multiple subject candidates</li> <li>initial education specialist credential candidates</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>initial multiple subject candidates</li> <li>initial single subject candidates</li> </ul>
<b>Format</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>RICA Written Examination (WE)</li> <li>RICA Video Performance Assessment (VPA)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Commission-developed CA TPA model with extended instruction-related tasks performed by the candidate</li> <li>Locally-developed model approved by the CTC with a variable number of extended instruction-related tasks performed by the candidate</li> </ul>
<b>Main Applicable Education Codes</b>	§44283 and §44283.2	§44320.2 and SB 1209 (Chap. 517, Statutes of 2006)
<b>Scoring</b>	Scored centrally by scorers hired and trained by the contractor	Scored locally within each teacher preparation program
<b>Purpose and Content Covered</b>	<p>Verifies knowledge of effective reading instruction in the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Planning and organizing reading instruction based on ongoing assessment</li> <li>Developing phonological and other linguistic processes related to reading</li> <li>Developing reading comprehension and promoting independent reading</li> <li>Supporting reading through oral and written language development</li> </ul>	<p>Assesses candidate performance relative to twelve of the thirteen TPEs, summarized as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Making subject matter comprehensible to students</li> <li>Assessing student learning</li> <li>Engaging and supporting students in learning</li> <li>Planning instruction and designing learning experiences for students</li> <li>Creating and maintaining effective environments for student learning</li> </ul>

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<b>Type of Assessment</b>	WE: 4-hour paper and pencil test containing both multiple choice and constructed-response items  VPA: video of candidate teaching reading plus self-assessment	CA TPA Model: Series of instructional tasks embedded in the teacher preparation program relating to teaching performance relative to the <i>Teaching Performance Expectations</i>  Other TPA Models: Series of various instructional tasks embedded in the teacher preparation program relating to teaching performance relative to the <i>Teaching Performance Expectations</i>
<b>Current Exam Fees to the Candidate</b>	WE: \$140; VPA: \$232	N/A or Unknown at this time
<b>Data Maintenance, Storage, Retrieval</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All data maintained in a standardized format by external contractor</li> <li>• Data are owned by the Commission</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All data would be maintained by each local teacher preparation program sponsor</li> <li>• Data would be owned by each local teacher preparation program sponsor</li> </ul>

\* For more detailed information visit the CCTC web site at <http://www.ctc.ca.gov>.

### Major Considerations in Incorporating the RICA Examination into the TPA

#### • Who is Required to Take Both Assessments

The candidates who have to take the RICA examination are not necessarily the same as those who have to take the TPA. California-trained candidates subject to the RICA are the initial multiple subject and the initial education specialist candidates. The RICA examination does not apply to single subject candidates.

All multiple and single subject candidates are subject to the TPA. The TPA does not apply to education specialist candidates.

If the RICA examination and the TPA examination were consolidated, the RICA examination would still need to continue to exist separately and to be administered separately from the TPA in order to address the needs of education specialist candidates, out of state candidates, and already-credentialed teachers who want to add a multiple subject authorization. There would not be a cost savings to the Commission or to these candidates for these reasons if the RICA were to be incorporated within the TPA. Costs to candidates might increase since there would be fewer candidates subject to taking the RICA. The Commission would still need to maintain and periodically address the validity of the RICA examination over time.

In addition, because single subject candidates are not subject to the reading instruction competence requirement, there would need to be two versions of the teaching performance assessment, one that is for multiple subject teachers and incorporates



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content relating to reading instruction, and another that is for single subject teachers and does not incorporate content relating to reading instruction.

- **Implementation Responsibility**

The Commission currently has responsibility for the RICA examination. This examination is administered statewide in a standardized manner by an external contractor. The contractor provides registration, administration, scoring, reporting, content validation, and data management services within the contract on behalf of the Commission.

The responsibility for the registration, administration, scoring, reporting, and data management services for the TPA will lie within each local teacher preparation program.

- **Consistency of Implementation**

Currently there is statewide consistency in the manner in which the RICA examination assesses each candidate's knowledge, skills and abilities relating to the teaching of reading because there is a standardized RICA examination that is administered and centrally scored by an outside testing contractor. The teaching performance assessment, however, will be administered locally by each individual teacher preparation program and it will be locally scored by trained assessors from within each teacher preparation program. Each local teacher preparation program will be designing its own implementation plan for how and where the teaching performance assessment tasks, including any potential RICA-related task, will be embedded within the program.

- **Inclusion of RICA Content Into all Commission-Approved TPA Models**

If the knowledge, skills and abilities currently assessed via the RICA examination were required to be incorporated within the TPA, this requirement would apply to all TPA models, not only the Commission's CA TPA model. The Commission would be required to develop and validate a new reading instruction-related teaching performance assessment task. A similar responsibility would also devolve on the developers of any alternate teaching performance models approved by the Commission.

- **Content Coverage**

As noted above in *The CA TPA Model: Description of the Tasks*, the TPA used by Multiple Subject candidates assesses their pedagogical knowledge, skills, and abilities related to instructing the liberal arts subject areas, including, but not limited to, language studies, literature, mathematics, science, social science, history, humanities, the arts, physical education and human development. The various scenarios within each of the tasks focus on instructing a different subject area to give the candidate a broad experience in demonstrating their abilities to each all students in accordance with the K-12 student academic content standards. None of the current TPA tasks focus specifically on the teaching of reading.

The RICA is based on the RICA Test Specifications, which reflect the knowledge, skills, and abilities needed specifically for reading instruction. Both the TPA and the RICA

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share the general concepts of instruction, but the focus of their respective areas is specific with relatively little overlap.

If the knowledge, skills, and abilities assessed currently by the RICA were incorporated into the TPA, the depth of coverage of each of the RICA domains could be reduced.

- **Examination Formats**

The RICA examination offers the candidate a choice of two separate formats: written examination and video performance. The vast majority of RICA examinees choose the written format, which is considered both time- and cost-effective by many candidates.

All of the teaching performance assessment models rely on actual candidate performance, and thus are more costly in terms of time and effort to create and score. There is no written version of a teaching performance assessment since by its very nature, the examination is based on the assessment of the in-class and/or with-K-12 student activities designed and implemented by the teacher candidate as appropriate to the candidate's grade level and/or subject area.

- **Scoring Considerations**

If the knowledge, skills, and abilities currently assessed by the RICA were to be incorporated into one or more tasks within a teaching performance assessment, all of the scoring would need to be done by trained assessors. These individuals are typically faculty, K-12 teachers, mentors, and others with extensive teaching backgrounds. Since the TPA is required to be locally implemented within each teacher preparation program, each program sponsor would need to make sure that there was a sufficient number of trained assessors available to score the TPA task(s) relating to the teaching of reading. The program sponsor would also be responsible for ensuring that these assessors are regularly recalibrated over time, for replacing and/or adding new assessors as needed, and to assure that each assessor had met the minimum qualifications for being an assessor of the knowledge, skills, and abilities related to the teaching of reading.

The costs to the developers of alternate TPA models to develop and implement assessor training and assessor scoring training related to the assessment of the knowledge, skills and abilities related to the teaching of reading are unknown, as are the costs to program sponsors using these models who would be responsible for assuring that there was a sufficient number of trained assessors available within their individual programs to meet candidate needs.

- **Validity Considerations**

The RICA examination is currently undergoing a validity study based on the most recently-adopted state framework relating to reading instruction for K-12 students. The revalidation is expected to result in some changes to the RICA examination structure and/or content. These changes would need to be reflected within whatever TPA tasks would be developed if the RICA-related content were to be incorporated with the TPA task structure. The initial and periodic content validation of each TPA model, including

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any RICA-related content incorporated within the model, would be the responsibility of the developer of that approved TPA model.

A further validity issue is that presently a candidate who passes the RICA but does not complete the teacher preparation program, may later complete the program and, as long as the passing date is within five years, use that RICA score toward certification. If the reading instruction assessment became part of the TPA, this would no longer be the case.

- **Opportunity for Candidates Who Do Not Pass to Retake the Examination**

Candidates who take and do not pass the RICA currently have multiple opportunities to retake the examination. There is a sufficient number of items available for the written RICA examination to accommodate candidates who need to retake the RICA, and no further development work needs to be done to the current RICA examination to accommodate these candidates.

The Commission would likely need to develop, validate and train assessors on not one, but several reading instruction-related tasks for the CA TPA in order to provide a valid opportunity for candidates who do not pass the reading instruction-related TPA task to retake this task. This same activity would likely also apply to the developers of alternate TPA models.

- **Data Collection, Reporting, Maintenance and Storage**

The data from the RICA examination are used as part of the Title II data reported to the U.S. Department of Education. These data are now centrally available from the testing contractor for each program and for all candidates within each program. If the RICA examination is incorporated with the teaching performance assessment, there are five major implications relating to data collection and use.

The first of these is that the data related to the assessment of the teaching of reading would not be standardized for each candidate nor across programs because each model of a TPA approved by the Commission differs in its nature and in its scoring rubrics. Thus, there would no longer be a common score or common outcomes data to be reported to the U.S. Department of Education for Title II purposes.

The second implication is that the candidate data would no longer be centrally available but would instead be kept by each individual teacher preparation program. There is currently no standard, common format for the reporting and storage of these data by teacher preparation programs since they have previously relied on the RICA testing contractor to provide the data.

A further implication is for the historical maintenance and accessibility of these data over time. Currently the Commission's contract with the testing contractor specifies that the Commission owns these data and in the event that the RICA testing contractor changes, the RICA data will follow to the new contractor. Once the data are no longer centrally available through a contractor and the data are instead owned and maintained by each

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individual teacher preparation program, it will be the responsibility of the teacher preparation program to maintain the data historically for retrieval.

There are additional instances when statistical information is needed, such as the periodically-issued *Report on Passing Rates of Commission-Approved Exams* and the information requests received on an ongoing basis from legislators, researchers, and other state agencies. Many times the information requested includes statistics based on demographic information. It would be important that all TPA program sponsors keep identical information on their TPA participants so the data retains its integrity. This task could become more difficult over time as there would not be a centralized repository for these data.

- **Diagnostic Information**

The diagnostic information available on the RICA score reports aids candidates who need to retake the examination. If the RICA became a component of the TPA, this diagnostic information would need to be standardized so a candidate from one institution would not obtain an unfair advantage over someone from another program who might receive a different type or level of information about his/her performance. This may also have implications for those education specialist candidates and others who might need to retake the traditional RICA. Since these individuals must, by law, verify knowledge of the same RICA Test Specifications as the Multiple Subject candidate, they would be disadvantaged if the RICA diagnostic information did not mirror that made available through the TPA, and conversely, if the TPA diagnostic information did not mirror that made available through the RICA.

The diagnostic information also helps individuals determine areas of need during their induction programs. Inconsistency in the information given and the format used might cause confusion for the beginning teachers and those assisting them in the induction program.

On the other hand, teacher preparation programs would have immediate and possibly more specific feedback regarding the impact of their reading instruction coursework on the abilities of their students if the RICA were consolidated with the TPA. Even though candidates are given feedback under the current system, the scoring results may have more of an impact if the program becomes an integral participant in the administration and scoring of the assessment.

- **Cost Considerations**

The costs to candidates of the RICA examination are well-known. There is currently no cost to program sponsors of teacher preparation programs for the RICA assessment.

If the knowledge, skills and abilities currently assessed by the RICA examination are incorporated within the TPA, there could be unknown costs to the programs in terms of (a) assessment development; (b) validity work; (c) assessor training, calibration and retraining; and (d) data collection, reporting, maintenance and storage.